



SAN RAFAEL

THE CITY WITH A MISSION

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Date of Mailing: February 18, 2021

TO:	Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212 Sacramento, CA 95814	FROM:	City of San Rafael Community Development Department Attn: Paul Jensen, Community Development Director 1400 Fifth Ave San Rafael, CA 94901
	Responsible and Trustee Agencies, Utility Providers, Organizations, Neighboring Property Owners, Neighboring Occupants, and Interested Parties		

NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND SCHEDULED SCOPING MEETING FOR THE TISCORNIA MARSH RESTORATION PROJECT EIR

The City of San Rafael (City) is preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Tiscornia Marsh Restoration Project. The project proposes to restore the tidal marsh/mudflats located north and outboard of Canal Street and the diked marsh located north of the Albert J. Boro Community Center/Pickleweed Park playfields. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, this project is subject to environmental review. It has been determined that the project has the potential to result in environmental impacts and the preparation of an EIR is recommended to assess these impacts. The City is the “Lead Agency” for the project and is the public agency with the principal responsibility for approving and carrying out the project.

The City is issuing this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to invite comments on the scope and content of study for the EIR. This NOP is being sent to local agencies, nearby residents, and other interested parties. When the draft EIR is published, it will be sent to all parties who respond to this NOP or who otherwise indicate that they would like to receive a copy of the draft EIR.

RESPONDING TO THIS NOP: Responses to this NOP and any related questions or comments regarding the scope or content of the Draft EIR must be directed in writing to: **Paul Jensen, Community Development Director, City of San Rafael, 1400 Fifth Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901** or by e-mail to paul.jensen@cityofsanrafael.org.

Comments on the NOP must be received at the above mailing or e-mail address within 30 days of receipt of this notice, or **before Friday, March 19, 2021 at 5:00 PM**. Please reference the project title of “Tiscornia Marsh Restoration Project” in all correspondence.

Responses to this NOP should focus, specific to this project, on the potentially significant environmental effects that the project may have on the physical environment, ways in which those effects might be minimized, and potential alternatives to the project that should be addressed in the EIR. This focus aligns with the purpose of the EIR to inform the public about these aspects of the project.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROJECT LOCATION: The Tiscornia Marsh site covers 20 acres of tidal marsh and bay lands located north and outboard of East Canal Street (APN 009-142-01). The property, which is owned by Marin Audubon Society, is bound to the: a) south by a shoreline levee, Schoen Park (small City-owned park/playground) and Canal Street; b) west by the Albert J Boro Community Center and Pickleweed Park; c) east by the San Rafael Bay; and d) north by the San Rafael Creek. The neighboring Albert J Boro Community Center and Pickleweed Park covers approximately 15 acres which includes an active community center, community park and an expansive playfield (APNs 009-032-06, 08 and 09). Included in the City-owned holdings is an undeveloped, four-acre diked salt marsh, which is located north of the large playfield. Although subject to flooding in the winter months, this diked salt marsh is enclosed by a perimeter level and contains a well-used, informal pedestrian trail, which loops through the area. The Tiscornia Marsh and environs are presented in the attached Site Area Map (Attachment 1).

The Tiscornia Marsh has experienced considerable erosion along its bay ward edge, which is attributed to direct wave action from the bay. Over the last 30 years, approximately three acres of the tidal marsh has been lost to this erosion, which has dramatically impacted habitat for species such as the Ridgway's rail and salt marsh harvest mouse. Under current conditions, it is expected that this erosion will continue and will likely increase as sea level rises. The second critical issue for this general area is flooding. The adjacent Canal neighborhood is low-lying and is currently at risk to coastal flooding (as well as sea level rise).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Tiscornia Marsh would be restored to its former extents by beneficially reusing dredged material from local sources. A coarse beach would be constructed along the bay ward edge of the restored marsh to resist future erosion. Tidal action would also be restored to the City-owned diked marsh at the north end of Pickleweed Park. Altogether, the project would reconstruct approximately four acres of eroded tidal marsh, preserve, and protect the approximately eight remaining acres of Tiscornia Marsh, and restore approximately five acres of diked marsh by reconnecting it to tidal inundation. The Project would also construct a new 600-foot setback levee and improve approximately 1,100 feet of shoreline levee to achieve greater flood protection, public access, and habitat benefits. Major project elements include the: a) development of a coarse beach; b) reconstruction of the eroded tidal marsh; c) restoring the diked marsh to the bay; d) shoreline levee improvements; and e) development of an ecotone slope.

Project plans, project description and technical studies for this project can be found on the project web page at <https://www.cityofsanrafael.org/tiscornia-marsh/>.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: An Initial Study Checklist has NOT been prepared to accompany this NOP. The scoping of the topic areas to be studied in the EIR will be determined and confirmed as part of this NOP process. However, as part of the initial scoping review, City staff will be recommending that the following the EIR address the following potential environmental effects: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology/Soils, Hazards/Hazardous Materials, Noise, Public Services, Recreation, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, Transportation/Traffic, and Utilities/Service Systems. The EIR will examine project and cumulative effects and a reasonable range of alternatives to the project that may be capable of reducing or avoiding potential environmental effects that may be identified for the project. The topics of Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Mineral Resources, and Population/Housing will not be addressed in the EIR as these do not apply to the project or project site.

SCOPING MEETING: A scoping meeting will be held before the City of San Rafael Planning Commission on **Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 7 PM.** **COVID-19 ADVISORY NOTICE:** Consistent with Executive Orders No.-25-20 and No. N-29-20 from the State of California Shelter in Place Order, the San Rafael Planning Commission hearing listed above **WILL NOT** be physically open to the public and the meeting will be streamed live to YouTube at www.youtube.com/sanrafael. Instructions on how to participate online, will be available on the YouTube channel. This virtual meeting will include a brief overview of the EIR process and allow time for comments on the scope of the EIR.

For More Information: For additional information on the project or if you wish to be placed on a mailing list to receive further information as the project progresses, please contact Paul Jensen at (415) 485-5064, paul.jensen@cityofsanrafael.org or the mailing address above.

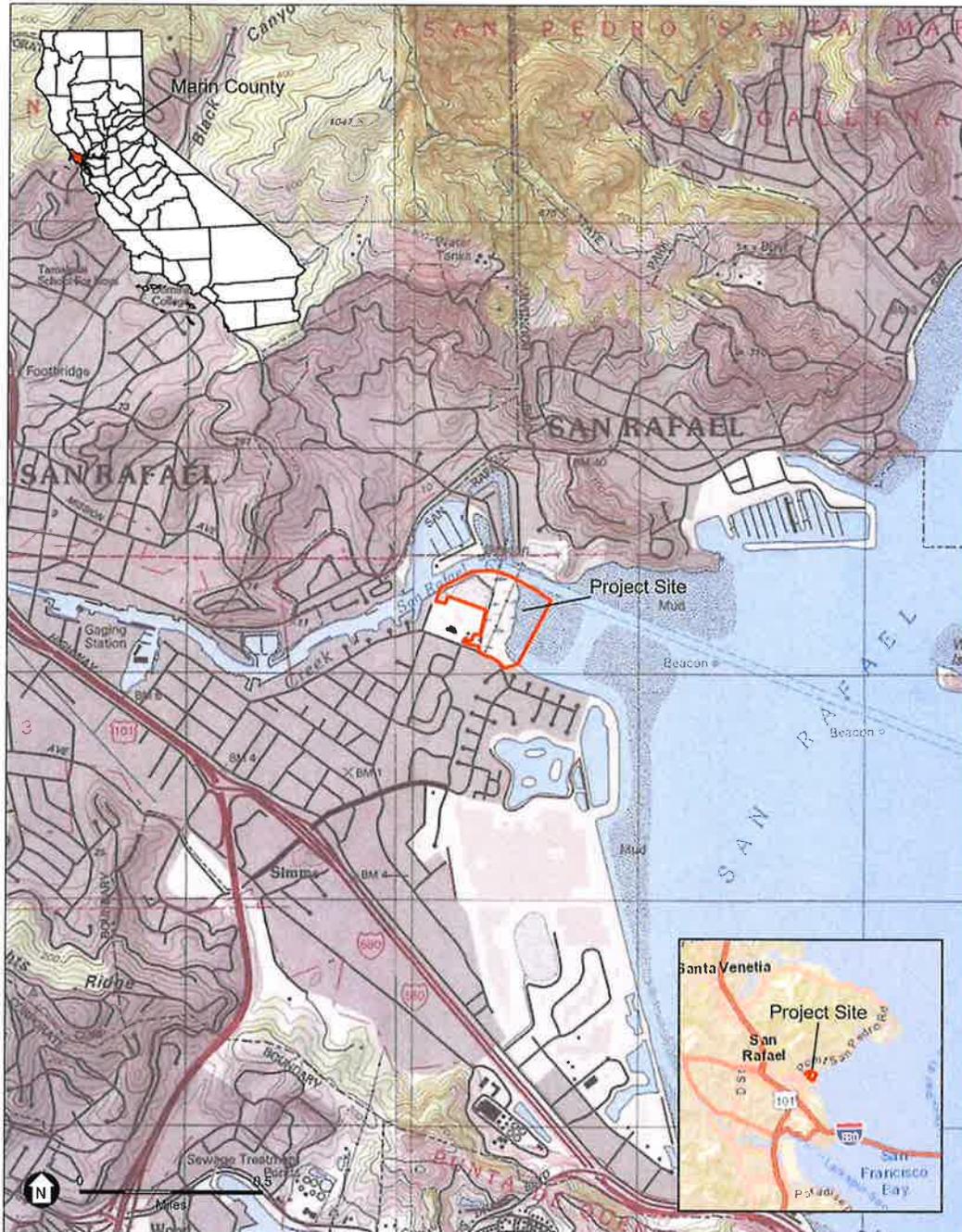
Date: February 18, 2021

Signature:



Name/Title: Paul A. Jensen, Community Development Director

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (State CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(A), 15103, 15375



SOURCE: USGS, Esri

Project Name

Figure 1
Regional Setting
Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea level Rise Adaptation





SOURCE: Aerial Imagery: Esri

160888.01



Figure 2
Project Location
Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea level Rise Adaptation